

Amitav Ghosh

Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*



AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED author, you have been described as a modern renaissance man and listed among the leading literary figures of our time. Due to the emphasis on universal human values embedded in the cross-cultural topics of your writing, you have been rightfully called a “citizen of the world.”

A NATIVE OF CALCUTTA, INDIA, you grew up in Bangladesh (then East Pakistan), Sri Lanka, Iran, and India. Upon graduating from the University of Delhi, you continued your education at Oxford, where you studied Social Anthropology and, after doing fieldwork in an Egyptian village, received Master of Philosophy and PhD degrees. You have taught at the University of Delhi as well as at Columbia and Harvard Universities, and you were a Distinguished Professor of Comparative Literature at Queens College, City University of New York.

YOUR ESSAYS AND FICTION cover an amazing array of topics and have received many honors. Your first novel, *The Circle of Reason*, was awarded France’s Prix Médicis (1990); *The Shadow Lines* was given two prestigious Indian prizes in the same year, the Sahitya Akademi Award and the Ananda Puraskar. With subsequent titles, you won the Arthur C. Clarke Award, the International e-Book Award at the Frankfurt Book Fair, and the Hutch

Crossword Book Prize. In 2007, you were awarded the Padma Shri, one of India’s highest honors, by the President of India. Your most recent novel, *Sea of Poppies*—the first volume of a projected series, *The Ibis Trilogy*—was short-listed for the Man Booker Prize in 2008. And you have just received the prestigious Dan David Prize for your remarkable reworking of the great tradition of the Western novel in transnational terms.

WHILE YOUR STORYTELLING is riveting, your fiction is invariably based on path-breaking research and fieldwork, which make it both informative and credible. Your collection of essays under the title *Incendiary Circumstances: A Chronicle of the Turmoil of Our Times* (2006), as well as your other thought-provoking responses on a range of issues and struggles, old and new, across the globe, have established you as a strong and clear voice on human principles and intellectual integrity.

FOR DEDICATING YOUR WORK to intellectual activism—taking uncompromising stands on cultural equity, human rights, local/global environment, and anti-imperialism—and utilizing the power of the pen to the highest ethical standards, we are pleased to confer upon you the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*.